

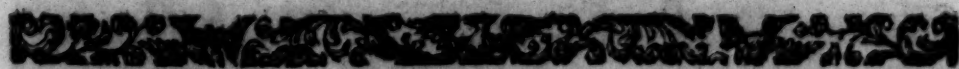
A
SERMON

PREACHED AT

DAVENTRY,

DECEMBER 7, 1755,

On occasion of the late EARTHQUAKE
at *Lisbon*, November 1, 1755.



[Price Six-pence.]

NEW-YORK: PUBLISHED BY

SERMON

TREACHED AT

DANFORTH

DECEMBER 7, 1755

On occasion of the late EARTHQUAKE
at Lisbon, November 1, 1755.

BY

[Price 5s. per copy]

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A

S E R M O N

PREACHED AT

D A V E N T R Y,

DECEMBER 7, 1755.

On occasion of the late

E A R T H Q U A K E

A T

L I S B O N,

November, 1, 1755.

BY S. CLARK. *K*

L O N D O N:

Printed for JAMES BUCKLAND at the *Buck*
in *Pater-noster Row.* MDCCLVI,

[Price Six-pence.]

2 E R M O N

TEACHING

D N E F A Y R

December 1755

On occasion of the

E A R T H Q U A K E

A T

E I S B O D

Monday, 1755

BY S. CLARK

L O N D O N

Printed for James Burchard at the Press
in Pall-mall near St. James's Church

[Price Sixpence]



ISAIAH xxvi. 9.

*When thy Judgments are in the Earth,
the Inhabitants of the World will
learn Righteousness.*



YOU will easily imagine, that the late awful Providence, with the Accounts of which our public Papers have been filled, directed my Thoughts to these Words ; in which the *Prophet* points out to us the true Improvement to be made of so interesting a Subject. --- And surely, if it becomes us to *acknowledge God in all our Ways*, to own his Interposition, even in the *common Affairs of Life* ; it must be yet more evidently our Duty to make wise and serious Reflections on *such an Event*, which is scarce to be parallell'd in History *. It is represented as the Mark of an abandon'd Character, *not to regard the Work of*

* This is strictly true, both as to the Numbers that have perished, and the vast Distances at which the Shock was felt. By the Earthquake at *Lima* not more than twelve hundred were killed, and in the Port and Town of *Callao*, which was destroyed at the same time by an Inundation, not quite five thousand. Vide *Account of the Earthquake at Lima*, p. 137, 148.

the Lord, or consider the Operation of his Hands (a); and the Prophet complains, in the Words following the Text, that, though God lifted up his Hand, the Wicked would not see: whereas the Psalmist assures us, that the Wise will observe these things (b); they will seriously lay them to Heart, acknowledge the Hand of Providence, and make it their solicitous Endeavour to fall in with the practical Design of such Dispensations. If it may reasonably be expected, that the Death of an Individual of our Species should make some serious Impressions on our Minds; and every Instance even of private Distress awaken some Sentiments of Compassion and Tenderneſs in our Breast: how deeply ought we to be affected, when we hear of Thousands that have perished in one Grave; when a whole Nation is reduced on a sudden from the most prosperous and flourishing State, to the very Brink of Destruction! And how unpardonable, to suffer such Admonitions of Providence to pass unobserved and unimproved!

Let us not then imagine the Subject foreign to us, or attend to it only as a matter of Curiosity; but let a sense of Religion and Humanity join to inspire us with every proper Sentiment, that we may reap the most lasting and important Fruits from this fatal Event.

(a) Psal. xxviii. 5. Isa. v. 12. (b) Psal. cvii. 43.

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But before we enter upon the more particular Discussion of the Subject, it may not be improper to introduce it, with giving a short and general View of those Circumstances attending this Calamity, (as far as they can be collected from the very imperfect Accounts we have as yet received); which will have the greatest Tendency to impress our Minds, and prepare us for receiving those Instructions, which the Occasion will so naturally furnish.

We are assured then, by undoubted Authority, that on the first Day of *November*, at nine in the Morning, so violent a Shock of an *Earthquake* was felt at *L I S B O N**, that the Palace, and most of the public Edifices, with a great Part of the City, were laid in Ruins. And to complete the Calamity, a most dreadful *Conflagration* † ensued, by which those Houses, which the Earthquake had spared, were con-

* Though in this short and general Account of the Effects of the Earthquake, the Destruction of *Lisbon* only is mentioned, as being the most remarkable Fact, and most likely to impress the Mind; it is well known, that many other Places, both in *Portugal* and *Spain*, were either absolutely destroyed, or greatly injured by the same Shock. And later Accounts make it very probable, that the City of *Mequinez* in the Kingdom of *Morocco* has shared the same Fate with *Lisbon*. For the *Distance* to which this Calamity has extended, see the *Note* in *Page 20*.

† These Fires appear to have been chiefly occasioned by the Fall of the Houses; tho' it is certain, that some *Incendiaries* took that Opportunity of setting Fire to other Parts of the Town, in order to enrich themselves by Plunder. The last Accounts assure us, that much more Damage has been sustained by the Fire, than by the Earthquake itself.

sumed.

sumed.—It is easy to imagine, that such a Catastrophe must have been fatal to great Numbers of the Inhabitants : And accordingly it appears but too evident, even from the lowest Calculation, that many Thousands have perished *. The Royal Family had but just Time to make their Escape, before the Palace fell to the Ground ; nor could their Rank preserve them from suffering great Extremities upon the Occasion.

It is impossible for any of us to conceive the Horror, with which the Inhabitants must have been seized, when on a sudden they felt the Earth trembling beneath them †, their Houses shaking, and just ready to bury them in their Ruins. Which Way could they flee for Safety, when they knew not, but the very Methods they took for their Preservation might prove the means of their Destruction ! What wild Amazement and Despair would they see painted in each others Countenances ! while all the Affection and Tendernefs of the most intimate Relations or Friends, instead of affording any Re-

* Though no exact Account can as yet be obtained of the Numbers that perished upon this Occasion, they must, without question, have been very considerable ; as the Shock was so sudden and unexpected, and the Probability of Escape, in the midst of a large populous City, whose Streets were but narrow, must be very small.

† All Accounts agree, that the Shocks did not last above seven or eight Minutes ; and it does not appear that the Inhabitants had the least Apprehension of the Calamity, till it came upon them.

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lief, would only serve to encrease the Horror of the Scene, and give to each a more exquisite Feeling of their Misery. What horrid Shrieks must have been heard from amidst the Ruins ! what dying Groans ! what importunate Cries for Mercy ! What an Emblem of the *last great Day*, when the Foundations of the Earth shall be removed !

As for those who survived this general Destruction, what must have been their Consternation and Distress, to behold that rich, magnificent Capital, so lately their Glory and their Pride, turned into a Heap of Ruins ! to see themselves in one fatal Moment stripped of all their Possessions, and left absolutely bare and destitute ; many of them reduced at once, from all the Affluence of Fortune to the Extremes of Poverty ! The Man, who, when he rose in the *Morning*, could have counted his Thousands, and perhaps was forming Schemes of Business or Pleasure, before *Noon*, saw all his Treasures bury'd in the Earth, and found himself in want even of the *Necessaries* of Life. What affecting Accounts have we received of Multitudes of unhappy Sufferers, wandering in the open Fields, and depending upon the Charity of others for a bare Subsistence ! No wonder the Reflection upon this melancholy Change in their Circumstances, joined with the Apprehension of

of what might still lie before them *, should fill them with unutterable Anguish, and prove almost sufficient to drive them into Despair.—But there is yet a more *tender* Part in which our Brethren have suffered ; I mean in the Loss of their Acquaintance, their Friends, and dearest Relations. Perhaps there are few of the remaining Inhabitants, who have not shared in this Part of the Affliction. How many Parents, by this awful Stroke, have been at once bereaved of their Children, and have found all the Sweets of domestic Life turned into Bitterness ! How many Children are become destitute Orphans ! while those, who were united in the closest and most endearing Bonds, have been violently torn from each others Embraces, and the Survivor overwhelmed with the deepest Distress.

The Report of so fatal and extensive a Calamity could not but greatly affect us, if the Persons concerned in it stood in no other Relation to us than that of our *Fellow-Creatures* ; or even though they were our *national Enemies*, they would certainly be entitled to our sincerest Compassion : but we ought to remember, that they are in the Number of our most faithful *Allies* ; and that as our Commerce with them is

* We are told, that the Shocks were repeated for several Days after the 1st Instant, and some of them with great Violence.

so considerable, *our own* Interest is intimately connected with theirs. To which may be added, that though, through a kind Providence, most of our own *Countrymen*, who resided there, have escaped with their *Lives*, there is too much reason to fear they have lost the greatest Part of their *Effects*; the Consequences of which, it may be easily imagined, must be severely felt by their Correspondents at home: nor is it for us to say, how wide the Evil may extend.

Such then is that awful Dispensatiou of Providence, to which I would now call your Attention; and from which it becomes us to learn those useful Instructions, it will so naturally suggest.--The Words I have chosen as the Foundation of the following Discourse, at the same time that they teach us to ascribe such Events to the Divine Interposition, point out to us the Influence they ought to have upon our Conduct. *When thy Judgments are in the Earth, the Inhabitants of the World will learn Righteousness*: that is, Such signal Displays of the Power and Justice of God have an immediate tendency to inspire the Minds of Men with a religious Fear and Reverence, and beget in them a solicitous Concern to secure an Interest in *his* Favour, who can so easily consume them in his Wrath.

In pursuing our Reflections on this Subject, I shall, in the first Place, enquire in what Sense such Calamities may be called *the Judgments of God*; and then endeavour to lead you into the right Improvement of so interesting an Event.

I. It may be proper to begin with considering in what Sense, this, or the like national Calamity, may be reckoned amongst the *Divine Judgments*. And the Enquiry is of the more Importance, as we are in Danger of falling into very mistaken Apprehensions upon this Subject *. For while some have unadvisedly represented them, as marking out the Persons on whom they fell, for the most *notorious* Offenders, and the *peculiar* Objects of the Divine Vengeance; others, from their Solicitude to avoid the Charge of Superstition, have fallen into the opposite Extreme, and excluded the Providence of God from any Concern in such Events; or at least have seem'd unwilling to allow, they were intended to promote the Interest of Religion and Virtue. ----- The Truth seems to lie between both these Opinions: --- For, as on the one hand, our *Saviour*, in the

* It is remarkable, that some of the Priests in *Portugal* have (as we are informed) taken the Advantage of the Superstition of the People to insinuate, that this dreadful Calamity was a Judgment of Heaven upon them for the great Lenity, that had been exercised towards the Protestants since his present Majesty came to the Throne.

Instance of those *Galileans*, whose Blood *Pilate* mingled with their Sacrifices, and the eighteen, upon whom the Tower of *Siloam* fell, has expressly cautioned us against passing Sentence upon Mens' *Characters*, from any *temporal* Calamities that may befall them; so on the other, he hath taught us to consider all Events as under the immediate Direction of Providence, and as constantly over-ruled to answer some wise Designs in the Scheme of his moral Government.---But to be more particular,

1. Such Calamities may be reckon'd amongst the *Judgments of God*, as his Providence is concerned in producing them. The Scripture directs us to ascribe all Events to the Divine Interposition. As he is stiled (c) *The Father of Lights, from whom descendeth every good and perfect Gift*; and as by his Almighty Energy our Lives are continually sustained: so we are assured, that all the Evils we suffer are by his Permission, or Appointment. (d) *He formeth the Light, and he createth Darknes also.* (e) *He killeth, and he maketh alive.* (f) *He woundeth, and his Hands make whole.* (g) *Shall there be any Evil in a City, and the Lord hath not done it?* (h) *As He turneth a Wilderness into a standing Water, and dry Ground into*

(c) Jam. i. 17.

(d) Isa. xlv. 7.

(e) 1 Sam. ii. 6.

(f) Job v. 18.

(g) Amos iii. 6.

(h) Psal. cvii. 35. &c.

Water-Springs, and there maketh the Hungry to dwell, that they may prepare a City for an Habitation : so when he seeth fit, They are diminished and brought low, through Oppression, Affliction and Sorrow. He poureth Contempt upon Princes, and causeth them to wander in the Wilderness, where there is no Water. Whatever second Causes are employed, the Scriptures teach us to consider them only as Instruments in the Hand of Providence, to accomplish its great Designs. And with the utmost Reason ; for these *second* Causes derive all their Power of producing any Effect from the great *First* Cause of all. This is most evidently the Case, with respect to those Events that result from the *Laws of Nature*, as they are usually stiled ; which, strictly speaking, are nothing but the immediate Agency of the Supreme Being, according to that settled Course which he originally established. Thus it is by the Divine Power, that the heavenly Bodies perform their regular Motions ; that the Sun transmits to us its reviving Beams ; that Day and Night, Summer and Winter, ureturn in their appointed Succession ; and the whole Frame of Nature continues in that beautiful Order, in which it came out of the Hands of its Creator : for *of Him and through Him are all Things.*--- Tho' it is allowed therefore that *Earthquakes*, as
well

well as the more common and ordinary Changes in Nature, are to be ascribed to *natural* Causes; yet this Concession is so far from excluding the Providence of God, that it necessarily supposes a divine Energy, as really in producing the Effect, as if it had been in the strictest Sense *miraculous*. And since the great Author of Nature is also the *moral Governor* of his rational Creatures, it is highly reasonable to believe, that all his dispensations have some Respect to their Conduct, and are intended to impart some useful Instruction to them. Of this the sacred Writings give us the strongest Assurance; and frequently recommend those practical Regards, which a firm Belief of this Truth is calculated to produce. From hence it will follow, that such Events as that now under Consideration may very properly be represented, not only as the immediate Effects of the divine Power, but as designed to answer some wise and valuable Purposes in the Scheme of Providence; and especially, to have a moral Influence upon the Minds of Men.

It is true the Expression in the Text, *the Judgments of God*, seems at first View to convey somewhat of a different Idea, and might incline one to look upon such Calamities *universally*, as Marks of the divine Vengeance against the

the Persons or Nations, on whom they are inflicted. And it must be acknowledged, it is often used in this Sense in Scripture. But not now to plead, that the peculiar Dispensation the *Jews* were under, in which national Prosperity was promised in case of Obedience, would naturally lead them to esteem every calamitous Event, as a Punishment for their Breach of the Law; and that the *Sacred Writers*, being divinely inspired, might with great Propriety speak of such Events, in a manner, which would be altogether unjustifiable in *others*, who are unacquainted both with the Designs of Providence, and the true Characters of Men; not now I say to insist upon this, it may be sufficient to observe, that the Word *Judgments* is sometimes used to express the Dispensations of Providence *in general*, and sometimes even those Afflictions which befall *good* Men, and which are most evidently designed for their *Advantage*. The first of these Senses it seems to have in *Psal. xxxvi. 6.* where the *Psalmist*, after celebrating the divine Perfections, adds, *Thy Judgments are a great Deep: O Lord, thou preservest Man and Beast:* And the latter, in *Pf. cxix. 75.* *I know thy Judgments are right, and that in Faithfulness thou hast afflicted me.* On the whole therefore we may conclude, that the same Language may very properly be used by us upon the

the present Occasion, without implying any Reflection on the moral Character of the Persons who have suffered, or presuming to enter into all the Designs of Providence.

2. But we may add farther, that, as *Sin* is the Cause of all our Sufferings, we may, without offending against our *Saviour's* Rule, look on such Events in the *general*, as awful Instances of the Demerits of Sin, and as Presages of that terrible Destruction, which by the righteous Appointment of God will be the Portion of the impenitent Sinner. We are not indeed rashly to conclude, that the unhappy Sufferers were greater Sinners than the Nations around them ; but we know, that *all* have justly incurred the divine Displeasure ; and as they have rendered themselves unworthy of his Favours, so the various Evils and Calamities of Life ought to be considered, in one View, as the Punishment of their Offences : For we are assured, that when *Sin* entered into the World, then came *Death*, with all its fatal Attendants. The Removal therefore of *every one* of our Species is the Execution of that Sentence, which was pronounced upon the first Transgression ; and should remind us of the bitter Effects of Sin, which has given its Sting to our mortal Foe. Certainly then, so terrible an Event, which involves in it the Destruction of *Thousands*, ought to fill us with the
deepest

deepest Awe of the divine Majesty, and a holy Fear of his Displeasure, whose Anger is Death, and whose Indignation is worse than Death; and while it presents us with so striking an Instance of the dreadful Consequences of Sin even in the *present* State, it should lead us to reflect upon that inconceivably greater and more complicated Ruin, which awaits all the Ungodly in the *other* World; and powerfully engage us, to use the Means which the Gospel has provided, for escaping the Wrath to come.

In this Sense then we may likewise say, *the Judgments of God are in the Earth*, without incurring the Imputation of *Superstition*, or *Severity* in judging our Brethren. And indeed it must be acknowledged highly unreasonable in us, to pronounce upon the Characters of Men, from such calamitous Events. For who are we, that we should thus presume to penetrate the divine Counsels, and determine what are the particular Designs of Providence? The wise Disposer of all Things may have a thousand Purposes to serve by such Dispensations, to which we are utter Strangers. We see every Day, Afflictions are the Lot of the best Men; and though we allow, (as hath been already observed) that they are, in *one* respect, Marks of the divine Displeasure against Sin (since even the Best are Sinners) yet we are taught to look upon them

them in *another* View, as the Corrections of a Father, and intended for the Exercise of their Faith and Patience, and the Means of training them up for Glory and Immortality.

Far be it from us therefore, in this Instance, to pronounce upon the Reasons of the divine Conduct, or to sit in Judgment upon our Brethren; to many of whom no doubt this Stroke, awful and fatal as it proved, was intended as a kind and gracious Deliverance from the Sorrows of the present State, and an Entrance into the Joys of a better.

II. Having thus endeavoured to explain the Sense, in which we are to understand the Expression in the Text, as applied on the present Occasion, we shall proceed, in the Second Place, to direct you to the practical Improvement, which it becomes us to make of this awful Providence. *When thy Judgments are in the Earth, the Inhabitants of the World will learn Righteousness.*

No Affliction, whether public or private, is sent in vain. And though we cannot enter into *all* the Designs of Providence in appointing it; yet *one* great End we know must be, to awaken the Minds of Men to a more serious Attention to divine Things, to render them more sensible of their Dependence on God, and

more solicitous to secure his Favour. *The will of God in all his Conduct towards the Children of Men is this, even their Sanctification.*

The present Occasion will furnish us with many very useful Reflections; out of which we shall select and insist upon those that follow.

I. The melancholy Accounts we have received of the Sufferings of our Brethren, should excite in our Breasts the most tender Sentiments of *Humanity* and Compassion, and engage us to offer up our most earnest *Prayers* in their behalf. We have a Royal Precedent for this, in the Message, which upon this Occasion his Majesty was pleased to send to his Parliament; which discovers the most affectionate Sympathy towards the unhappy Sufferers, and the most generous and benevolent Concern for their Relief. And surely *so dreadful a Calamity* (the most dreadful to which human Nature is exposed) *cannot fail of affecting the Hearts of all Persons, who have any Sense of Religion or Humanity.* Are we moved at beholding a *single* Object of Distress, and shall we be unaffected when such a complicated Scene of Desolation and Misery is presented to us? Imagine you had seen the METROPOLIS of *this* Kingdom levelled to the Ground, all its magnificent Churches, stately Edifices, and immense Treasures, buried in Ruins: Imagine you had been
Witnesses

Witnesses to all that Confusion and Horror which such an Event must have produced; that you had heard the Shrieks and Cries of the wretched Inhabitants, and had seen them perishing by thousands without Distinction, and without a Possibility of Relief. Image to yourselves the Consternation and Distress of the Survivors, their loud Lamentations for the Loss of their Friends, and the Extremities to which they must have been reduced by the Destruction of their Substance. Consider the universal Confusion that would spread at once through the Kingdom, and how sensibly the Calamity must be felt by all Ranks and Degrees of Men. --- Suppose this Scene then to be *real*, and try how it would impress you. Would it not inspire the most lively Sentiments of Pity and Commiseration, even though you were not *personally* concerned? Could any Heart, think ye, be so hard, as not to feel such aggravated Distress? Could any Breast be so contracted within itself, as not to admit some Feelings of Humanity and Tendernefs, when the Members of the *same* Community with ourselves are suffering so deeply? ---- And what, shall we steel our Hearts against the Exercise of this Sympathy, because *L I S B O N*, and not *L O N D O N*, is the Seat of Desolation? Are they not *Men*? Are they not our *Brethren*, the Children of

one common Father, Partakers of the same nature, and designed like ourselves for Immortality? Nay, are they not *Christian*? Though unhappily fallen into many Errors; yet do they not acknowledge the *same* GOD, and are they not the Disciples of the *same* JESUS with ourselves? Far be it from *Protestants* to confine their benevolent Regards to those of the *same* religious Profession; or to entertain any Resentment, on account of the Persecutions they may have endured from their deluded Brethren *. Rather let them rejoice, in having it in their Power to return Good for Evil, and to shew the superior Excellence of a Religion, which inspires the noblest and most generous Sentiments; that others, observing their good Works, may be constrained to glorify their Father in Heaven.

And if we feel these humane Affections, it will be natural for us to express them in the most sincere and fervent *Intercessions* before the Throne of God. Let us pray, that the Survivors may be supported under this heavy Trial;

* Humanity and Compassion towards the *Persons* of the Distressed is very consistent with the utmost Abhorrence of their *Principles*: And though the Sufferings, which many of our Protestant Brethren have endured in the *Inquisition*, may justly inspire us with Indignation against that cruel and iniquitous Court, yet they ought by no means to harden our Hearts against the Exercise of the most tender Pity and Sympathy on so melancholy an Occasion.

that

that the Father of Mercies would look down upon them with Pity in this their low Estate, and afford them all needful Succour and Relief; that he would dispose their Minds to an entire Submission to his Will, and teach them the right Improvement of this desolating Judgment; that by humbling themselves under his mighty Hand, they may be exalted in due time. Let us also pray, that it would please the Father of Spirits to enlighten their Minds in the Knowledge of the Truth, that they may be recovered out of those Errors and Superstitions into which they have so long been sunk; and that he would cause true, primitive Christianity to spread in that, as well as in the neighbouring Kingdoms, till by degrees its Influence shall extend to every Nation under Heaven.

2. While we are sympathizing with our Brethren under this awful Stroke, it becomes us *thankfully* to acknowledge the Safety and Tranquility with which we are indulged. This is so far from being inconsistent with the most tender Sense of their Calamity, that the more deeply we feel for them, the more open will our Hearts be to Sentiments of Gratitude for our own Preservation. If we were *not* liable to the like Calamity, yet still the prosperous and flourishing State of these Kingdoms, would call
for

for the most sincere Acknowledgments ; since that Being, from whom all our Enjoyments are derived, can by various *other* Methods strip us of all, and leave us naked and destitute. But let it not be forgotten, that we ourselves have had an Alarm of the *same* Nature, which it is well known struck a Panick through our Capital ; nor have we, even upon the present Occasion, escaped some sensible Effects of the Shock. And though the Hand of God, lifted up over us, has not hitherto proceeded to any Extremities, yet these Instances are sufficient to convince us, that our *Situation* does not exempt us from the like Danger. Let the Reflection then upon our Safety, and those invaluable Privileges, which through the divine Lenity and Forbearance are still continued to us, excite our warmest Gratitude. Consider how much we have abused his Goodness, how justly therefore we have forfeited his Regards ; and how astonishing his Patience and Long-suffering towards so ungrateful and rebellious a People. Remember the *same* Hand that has thus awfully visited our *Brethren*, has spared and protected *us*.—What Returns of Praise and Thanksgiving are due for such unmerited, distinguished Favours !

We are too apt to confine our Views to Second Causes ; and because the Divine Being *retires*, as it were, *behind* his Works, we, through a

culpable

culpable Inattention, too easily forget his Hand, and, while we are tasting the Fruits of his Bounty, remain insensible of our great Benefactor. It is necessary therefore, by frequent Reflection, to impress upon the Mind a deeper Sense of our Dependence on God, for Life, Breath, and all things; to live *as seeing him who is invisible*, and to own his Providence in all the Enjoyments we receive, by whatever Means they are conveyed to us. Such an habitual Exercise of Gratitude would give a much higher Relish even to the *meaner* Pleasures of our Nature, would have a powerful Tendency to prevent their Abuse, and prepare the Mind for the most sublime Acts of Devotion and Love. Every Object would then lead our Thoughts to God, and, by continually exalting our Apprehensions of his Goodness, prove the Means of quickening us in his Service. Happy those, who know by Experience the happy Influence of so divine a Temper!

3. Another useful Lesson we may learn from this melancholy Providence, is, the *Vanity* and Uncertainty of all *earthly* Enjoyments. It is impossible to conceive how this Instruction can be more strongly enforced, than by such an Event. We see in the most convincing Light, how little the greatest Wealth, the highest Honours, or any of the most desirable Gifts
which

which this World is able to bestow, could avail their Possessors in the Day of their Distress. The Rich and the Poor, the High and the Low, the wise Man and the Fool, the Old and Young all swept away in one promiscuous Ruin ! The Palace of the MONARCH sharing the same Fate, with the Dwelling of the meanest of his Subjects ! Those who thought themselves the happiest in the Enjoyment of their Friends, are now perhaps amongst the most wretched and disconsolate ; while the Reflection upon their Loss creates the most piercing Anguish, and renders them, who were *one* Day the *Envy*, the *next* the *Pity* of all about them. How many, alas ! were cut off by this fatal Blow, in all the Gaiety of Youth, and the Vigour of Health, while a thousand agreeable Prospects were rising before them ! How many who had just attained the Height of their Wishes, and promised themselves the peaceful Enjoyment of what had so long been the Object of their Pursuit, saw all their fond Hopes blasted in a Moment, and the most flattering Expectations turned into the Bitterness of Despair ! How loudly then does such an Event call upon us, to place no Confidence in *Things which are not*, which have no solid, permanent Existence, and are therefore incapable of making us completely happy ! If those that have perished in this

general

general Destruction were allowed to admonish us from the Dead, would they not cry out, as with one Voice : (i) *Let not the wise Man glory in his Wisdom, neither let the mighty Man glory in his Might, let not the rich Man glory in his Riches ; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth the Lord, who exerciseth Loving-kindness, Judgment, and Righteousness in the Earth !*

Happy will it be, if, according to the Advice of the Apostle, we could learn to (k) *use this World, so as not to abuse it*, remembering that *the Fashion thereof is passing away*. These Enjoyments, it is true, have their Value, and ought to be received with Gratitude ; but they are utterly unworthy to engross our whole Attention, as if they were the only Portion designed us. If we are Christians indeed, (l) *our Life is hid with Christ in God* ; and when Christ, who is our Life, shall appear, we know that we shall also appear with him in Glory. How strongly then are we obliged to *set our Affections on Things above, where Christ sitteth at the right Hand of God !* If this be our prevailing Temper, we may look forwards, not with Regret, but with joyful Expectation, to

(i) Jer. ix. 23, 24. (k) 1 Cor. vii. 31. (l) Col. iñ. 1, 3, 4.

that Period when all the Grandeur and Riches of the World shall vanish as in a Moment, and this Earth itself, with all the Works therein, shall be consumed.

4. How reasonable is it, that we should, with all Humility, acknowledge and *adore* the *Power* and *Providence* of God, which in this Instance have been so signally displayed! It is true, the Effects which we see produced every Day, according to the *settled* Laws of Nature, are as convincing and illustrious Proofs of the divine Omnipotence, as any of those more *extraordinary* Events, which, because they occur but seldom, make a deeper Impression upon our Minds. But, as the generality of Men too easily overlook those Signatures of the divine Perfections, which are enstamped on all his Works, as well as those Marks of his constant Agency, which appear in the regular Exercise of his Providence, He is sometimes pleased to alarm them with more surprising and unusual Displays of his tremendous Power; which, though effected in a manner perfectly consistent with the stated Laws of Nature, are yet, on account of their *Novelty*, more adapted to strike the Mind, and lead it to serious Consideration. — And surely, nothing can be conceived more proper to inspire us
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with an awful Apprehension of the sovereign Power and Majesty of God, than such an Event as that which we have been contemplating. Especially, when it is consider'd, to what an amazing *Distance* the Shock extended, and what an immense Tract, both of Sea and Land, must have been affected by it *. The mightiest Monarch upon Earth, how contemptible does he appear, when compared with the supreme Ruler of the World: (m) *who shaketh the Earth out of her Place, and the Pillars thereof tremble!* All Nature is subject to his Controul. (n) *Fire and Hail, Snow and Vapour, and stormy Wind fulfil his Word.* As at his Command all things at first rose into Being, so at his Pleasure he can easily dissolve this beautiful and magnificent Frame. (o) *At his Rebuke the Channels of Water were seen, and the Foundations of the World were discovered at*

* The Shock was felt very severely by several of the inland Towns of *Portugal* and *Spain*, as well as all along the *Coast*; and few Countries in *Europe* seem to have entirely escaped. The Commotions that were perceived in the Waters in *our own*, and in the neighbouring Island, very evidently proceeded from the same Cause. The dreadful Effects of this Calamity in some Parts of the Continent of *Africa*, we have already observed; and we are credibly informed, that the Shock reached quite across the *Atlantic Ocean*, and was very sensibly felt as far as *Barbadoes* and *Antigua*. The astonishing manner, in which the Waters of the Ocean were affected, is well known, and the Inundation they occasioned in several Places.

(m) Job ix. 6.

(n) Psal. cxlviii. 8.

(o) Ps. xviii. 15.

the Blast of the Breath of his Nostrils. (p) He removeth Mountains, and they know it not : he overturneth them in his Anger : (q) He divideth the Sea by his Power. (r) Yea, the Pillars of Heaven tremble, and are astonished at his Reproof. (s) He hath a mighty Arm ; strong is his Hand, and high is his right Hand. (t) Who hath hardened himself against him and prospered ? (u) The Lord reigneth : let the People tremble : (x) Let all the Inhabitants of the World stand in Awe of him.

Most reasonable is it, that we should be possessed with a reverential Fear of that Almighty Being, who has all Power both in Heaven and Earth ; and hath shewn us by this awful Dispensation of his Providence, how easily he can destroy all our Confidence, and bring upon us the most sudden and inevitable Destruction. He has a thousand Ways, in which he can inflict deserved Punishment on his Adversaries ; nor is it possible for any created Power to withstand his Will. (y) *All Nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted unto him as less than nothing, and Vanity.* Shall we not then dread the Thought of offending *Him*, who has this absolute Dominion over us ; and who is able to raise

(p) Job ix. 5.

(s) Psal. lxxxix. 13.

(x) Psal. xxxiii. 8.

(q) Ibid. xxvi. 12.

(t) Job ix. 4.

(y) Isa. xl. 17.

(r) Ibid. ver. 11.

(u) Psal. xcix. 1.

us to the greatest Height of Happiness, or plunge us into the Depths of Misery and Despair ?

5. This Event should teach us the Importance of acquiring an Interest in the divine *Favour*, as the only solid Ground of Security and Happiness. It is true, we have no Reason to conclude, that such Calamities are only inflicted on the *greatest* Sinners ; the Good and Bad are, no doubt, often involved in one promiscuous Ruin. But surely the Consequences to each are widely different. That which to the *one* is a happy Release from the Burdens of Life, and a joyful Entrance upon eternal Glory, is to the *other* an Opening to future Misery, and proves only the *Beginning of Sorrows*. Since then we are all exposed to the like Danger, and know not how soon it may overtake us ; since no human Power can avert the Stroke, or yield us any Relief, how solicitous should we be to *make our Peace with God*, that, whatever be the Event, our Happiness may be secure !

As for those who are yet in their Sins, and therefore the Objects of the divine Displeasure, well may they tremble at the righteous Judgments of God ! Every *Appearance* of Danger may reasonably fill them with Terror, lest they should on a sudden

sudden be stripped of those Enjoyments in which they trusted as their Portion, and be left for ever hopeless and wretched. If this should be the unhappy Character of any amongst *us*, can we rest satisfied in so dangerous a State? How know we but the fatal Commission may be already gone forth, and ere the next Hour, we may be summoned into the eternal World, to make our Appearance before an incensed Judge? And can we be indifferent about so interesting an Event? An Event, in which not merely a *temporal*, precarious Interest is concern'd, which, like that which we have been considering, may be attended with the Loss of our *Substance*, our *Friends*, or our *Lives*; but which will certainly draw after it the Loss of our *Souls*. Oh! may the Father of Mercies awaken such from their fatal Slumbers, lest they *sleep the Sleep of Death*! Happy will it prove, if this awful Dispensation of Providence may rouse them to serious Reflection, and, by impressing them more deeply with a Sense of the Power of God, and the Punishments He is able to inflict, inspire them with a holy Fear of his Majesty, and a solicitous Concern to *flee from the Wrath to come*! — Think, if the Consequences of Sin, even *here*, are so terrible, how will the

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the Sinner endure, when the full Vials of divine Wrath shall be poured out upon him in the *other* World? Who *can abide in the Fierceness of his Anger?* Or (z) *who amongst us can dwell with everlasting Burnings?* What Heart can be strong, when God arms his Almighty Power for the Punishment of his Adversaries? (a) *He looketh on the Earth, and it trembleth: He toucheth the Hills, and they smoke. Who can bear the Indignation of the Lord?* If the Apprehension of such a *temporal* Calamity fill you with Horror, how will you stand in that dreadful Day, when you shall (b) *call to the Rocks and the Mountains, to fall on you, and hide you, from the Wrath of him that sits upon the Throne, and from the Wrath of the Lamb?* (c) *Consider this, all ye that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.* — But while a Sense of the irresistible Power and awful Majesty of your offended Sovereign may justly inspire Sentiments of *Terror*, let it never be forgotten, that the same almighty Being has also revealed himself, in the Gospel of his Son, under the most amiable and endear-

(z) Isa. xxxiii. 14.
(c) Psal. l. 22.

(a) Psal. civ. 32.

(b) Rev. vi. 16.

ing Characters. He has been pleased to declare his Purpose of Reconciliation to a guilty World, and has encouraged the greatest Sinners to repent in order to their obtaining the Remission of their Sins.—Being therefore moved by *the Terrors of the Lord* on the one hand, and constrained by these Displays of his Grace on the other, be persuaded (d) *now in this your Day, and know the Things that belong to your Peace, before they are for ever hid from your Eyes.*

As for those, who have Reason to hope that they are in a State of Favour and Acceptance with God, with what Thankfulness should they acknowledge that Grace, which has rescued them from Destruction ; and introduced them to a State of Security and Peace ? Well may *they* rejoice at *all* Times, and in *all* Events. For though the Foundations of the Earth should be removed, and the everlasting Hills be shaken, yet that *Covenant of Peace*, on which they rest their Hopes, shall never be removed. They have built upon a *Rock* ; and though the Winds should blow, and the Rain descend, and the Storm beat upon their House, it shall stand firm and unshaken. They may not indeed be ex-

(d) Luke xix. 42.

empted from the common Calamities of Life ; but they have a sure Refuge, to which they can at all times resort. (e) *The Name of the Lord is a strong Tower ; the Righteous runneth into it, and is safe.* They may be torn from the Embraces of their Friends, and deprived of their earthly Possessions : but (f) *nothing shall ever be able to separate them from the Love of God in Christ ; neither Death nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, Things present nor Things to come, nor Height nor Depth, nor any other Creature ; for all are theirs.*—Yea, in the great and terrible Day of the Lord, (g) *when the Heavens shall pass away with a great Noise, and the Elements shall melt with fervent Heat ; when the Earth also, and all the Works that are therein, shall be burnt up, and universal Ruin and Desolation ensue : They shall lift up their Heads with Joy, in the assured Expectation of (c) new Heavens and a new Earth, wherein dwelleth Righteousness.* That awful Event, of which the most dreadful Calamities, that have been ever felt by the Inhabitants of our World, are but *faint* Images, shall be to *them* the Beginning of an everlasting Day. It

(e) Prov. xviii. 10. (f) Rom. viii. 38, 39. (g) 2 Pet. iii. 10.
 (h) Ibid. ver. 13.

shall afford them an illustrious Triumph over all their Enemies : and after all the Sorrows and Trials of mortal Life, they shall be admitted by their Judge to taste the Joys of Immortality ; and being transformed into the glorious Image of their great Redeemer, they shall *be ever with the LORD.*

F I N I S.

ERRATUM.

Page 5, Note 1, last Line, *for* Page 20, *read* Page 27.



